

**State of Connecticut  
Department of Developmental Disabilities**

**NURSING STANDARD**

**LPN Participation In Medication Administration  
Certification Process # NS 09.3**

**Date of Issue:** March 2009

**Effective Date:** May 1, 2009

**Purpose:** To identify the standards of the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDS) for the participation of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in the Medication Administration Certification Process.

**Applicability:** This standard shall apply as written to all supervising nurses who are delegating the responsibility for medication administration to certified non-licensed staff and to Licensed Practical Nurses employed or contracted by Private Sector Agencies licensed or funded by the department .

**DEFINITIONS:**

Authorized LPN: a licensed practical nurse who has successfully completed the department's authorization program and may be delegated by an RN the responsibility to participate in certain aspects of the medication administration recertification process.

Certification: the baseline competency of a non-licensed person that means the person has successfully completed all requirement of the DDS Medication Certification Training Program approved by the department and has been issued a certificate authorizing him to be delegated the responsibility to administer medication to consumers in specific programs operated and licensed by the department.

Delegation: the transfer of responsibility for selected nursing tasks from the registered nurse to the LPN or qualified non-licensed personnel in accordance with Connecticut Board of Examiners for Nursing Memorandum of Decision Declaratory Ruling April 5, 1995.

Endorsed Instructor: a registered nurse identified by DDS to provide the authorization training to LPNs.

On-Site Practicum: the process specific to medication administration identified by the department to meet the requirements of the Connecticut Board of Examiners for Nursing Declaratory Ruling on Delegation to Unlicensed Assistive Personnel for agency, site, and person specific training and demonstration of skill competency.

Supervising nurse: a registered nurse assigned by a residential facility, respite center or day program to be directly responsible for the management of medical services provided to the consumer in the specific residential, respite or day program, who is responsible for delegating the task of medication administration to certified non-licensed personnel.

**INTRODUCTION:**

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Regulations Concerning The Administration of Medication specifies the process for non-licensed staff working in residential settings, respite centers, and day programs to obtain certification that allows them to be delegated responsibility to administer medications to consumers of the department. These regulations also indicate the responsibility of the supervising nurse to provide instruction and supervision of certified staff on a continuing basis. LPNs with authorization from the department, may assist the

RN in meeting this responsibility. LPNs who have not achieved this authorization may not participate in any area related to the medication administration certification process.

The Connecticut Nurse Practice Act section 20-87a (c) states that “the practice of nursing by a licensed practical nurse is defined as the performing of selected tasks and sharing of responsibility under the direction of a registered nurse or an advanced practice registered nurse and within the framework of supportive and restorative care, health counseling and teaching, case finding and referral, collaborating in the implementation of the total health care regimen and executing the medical regimen under the direction of a licensed physician or dentist.” The Declaratory Ruling On LPN Scope of Practice February 1989, indicates that “an itemized list of tasks and shared responsibilities cannot be identified” as “the art and science of nursing is constantly changing”. “Practical nurse licensure requires validation of completion of an approved preparatory program and successful completion of the licensing examination. This validation documents achievement of all theoretical and nursing skill competencies required of an entry level practical nurse in caring for individuals in any age group. This would comprise the proper and sufficient education and skills of the licensed practical nurse at the point of entry into the profession. Continuing education which validates competency may enable the licensed practical nurse to function competently beyond entry level.” In keeping with this ruling, DDS has identified the process for training of licensed practical nurses specific to the administration of medication by non-licensed persons in the DDS that would allow them to achieve this advanced competency. The Connecticut Board of Examiners approved this process as specified in this standard for Nursing in June 2005.

**NURSING STANDARD: Licensed Practical Nurses who have achieved “Authorization” from the DDS may participate in the Medication Administration Certification Process to the extent identified in this document.**

At this time, Authorization is limited to LPNs employed by private agencies or employed by nursing agencies that are contracted by private agencies licensed or funded by the department.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

### **A. Criteria for Initial LPN Authorization**

1. Application to DDS for LPN Authorization (Attachment A) that indicates that the identified requirements are met. These include:
  - Possession of a current, valid Connecticut license as an LPN
  - Present employment as an LPN by an agency licensed or funded by DDS or with a nursing agency contracted by an agency licensed or funded by DDS
  - Present employment must be on a full time basis for a minimum of 6 months, or on a part time basis for an equivalent period
  - Responsibilities must be at the residential site, respite program, or day program where the involvement in the process is to occur. This requirement will ensure that the LPN is familiar with the prescribed medications administered at the site, the medication routine as delegated by the supervising nurse, and the health needs of the individuals served at that site.
2. Completion of the DDS LPN Authorization Training Program taught by a DDS Endorsed Instructor that includes the following:
  - Review of information taught in the 21 hour Medication Administration Certification Training Program for Non-Licensed Personnel
  - Review of the DDS Medication Administration Regulations
  - LPN Scope of Practice as defined by Connecticut state statute
  - Role of the LPN in the medication administration certification process and other delegated tasks (Declaratory ruling on Delegation)
  - Observation skills with specific emphasis on observing certified staff in their performance of medication administration related tasks and responsibilities

- Review of the elements of a quality on-site practicum and application of this criteria in the determination of staff performance
  - Documentation skills with specific focus on the completion of Checklist A and B
  - Identification of errors/ problems with staff performance
  - Notification requirements (LPN to RN)
3. Recommendation for Authorization from the Endorsed Instructor
- Shall occur following the successful demonstration of knowledge and competency
  - Shall be contained in a letter of Authorization issued by DDS that identifies the scope of responsibility covered by the authorization.
  - Shall be considered the baseline competency for the delegation of the limited responsibilities the Authorized LPN may perform

**B. Further training requirements for Authorized LPNs prior to delegation of responsibility**

1. Once authorization has been granted to the LPN, the supervising nurse/delegating RN will determine the content of all additional training that will be needed by the LPN prior to delegation of this responsibility. This training shall be completed as soon as possible and, at a minimum, shall include the following:
- Needs and treatment plans of the individuals served in the home or program
  - Agency, site, and person specific information identified in checklist A
  - Communication process for reporting to RN
  - Reporting responsibilities of LPN to RN specific to scope of practice considerations and agency policy and procedure
  - Direct observation of at least one on-site practicum performed by the LPN
2. An outline of the training should be documented and maintained by the delegating RN.
3. Observation of the on-site practicum shall be documented on the Authorized LPN Performance Evaluation (Attachment A). These documents shall be maintained and available for review by DDS.

**C. Limited Responsibilities of Authorized LPN:**

1. Annual and/or Recertification On-Site Practicums
- An authorized LPN who has completed further training and had the responsibility delegated to them by the RN, shall be permitted to perform On-Site Practicums completed for the purpose of meeting the annual observation requirements and/or the recertification requirements. This includes:
- Reinforce the training components contained in On-Site Practicum Checklist A that have previously been presented to non-licensed staff by the RN at the time of initial certification
  - Observe certified staff in the performance of the medication administration steps outlined in On-Site Practicum Checklist
  - Determine if the staff person has met the criteria of the task (as defined during training) and document the appropriate rating (S-satisfactory, U- unsatisfactory, N/A-not applicable)
  - Document on Checklist A and B other findings under “comments” as appropriate
  - Review the statements on Checklist A and Checklist B forms and provide their signature and the date(s) as indicated
  - Ensure that certified staff read the statement on the Checklist A and Checklist B forms, and then sign and date the forms in the designated areas
  - Notify the RN of successful outcomes
  - Notify RN of unsuccessful trials so that the practicum can be re-scheduled to be done by the RN.
2. Initial On-Site Practicums (whether new to certification or new to the agency, must be administered by the RN. Any initial On-Site Practicum supervised by an LPN shall be considered invalid.

3. Any On-site Practicum completed for the purpose of recertification by a non-authorized LPN shall be considered invalid.
4. Periodic On-site Practicums may be assigned to the Authorized LPN in connection with retraining or quality oversight activities identified by the RN.
5. Quarterly Review of Medication Administration reports to the region may be completed by an Authorized LPN.
6. Retraining of certified staff following medication errors may be performed by Authorized LPNs if the concepts have previously been taught by an RN and the LPN is reinforcing the concept.

**D. Responsibilities of Supervising/Delegating RN:**

1. The RN will have the responsibility to perform the initial on-site practicum for staff seeking certification and/or for staff having an initial site specific on-site practicum for those certified staff who work and administer medications in more than one site.
2. The supervising nurse shall be required to adequately supervise the performance by the LPN of this delegated responsibility and shall document this supervision at least annually on the Authorized LPN Performance Evaluation (Attachment B).
3. The supervising nurse shall have the responsibility for reviewing the documentation of the On-Site Practicums performed by the Authorized LPN and signing and dating the form as identified in DDS Nursing Standard #08-4.
4. Issues that are identified by the RN during supervision shall be addressed by the supervising nurse. Retraining in this responsibility shall be provided by the RN as necessary.
5. The RN retains the accountability for this delegated task and as such may suspend delegation to the LPN at any time and recommend to DDS that Authorization not be renewed

**Application for Re-authorization**

Application shall be made to DDS by the LPN every two years prior to the authorization expiration date. Copies of the Authorized LPN Performance Evaluation (Attachment B) will be required to be attached to the Application for Authorization. Applications for Re-authorization will be sent to the LPN by DDS when due. The LPN is responsible to keep the Medication Administration Certification Unit advised of changes in address.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Attachment A- LPN Authorization Qualifications and Application**

**Attachment B- Authorized LPN Performance Evaluation**